

## Water Hyacinth Control Program Fact Sheet

We are very pleased that we can once again resume control operations against this aquatic nuisance.

### History and Background

Introduced to California more than 100 years ago

- Deceptively attractive plant  
    shiny green leaves  
    delicately transparent lavender flowers.
- Extremely prolific aquatic weed can quickly amass into a dense floating mat of vegetation.
- Few natural enemies
- Grows faster in warm weather than any other known plant

By the early 1980's

- severe infestations of the rapidly growing, floating aquatic plant
- created safety hazards for boaters,
- clogging navigation channels and marinas, and agricultural irrigation systems.

The Delta aquatic habitat was compromised by the large, floating hyacinth mats,

- greatly decreased the amount of dissolved oxygen in the water,
- replaced native plants,
- deposited silt and organic matter at several times the normal rate.

Economic impact:

- Delta marina operations lost \$600,000 in 1981 due to
  - o unusable slips and launch ramps,
  - o decreased sales,
  - o increased boat rental repairs, and
  - o labor and equipment to cope with the problem.

**1982** State legislation made Boating and Waterways the lead agency for the control of water hyacinth in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, its tributaries and the Suisun Marsh.

The initial control plan utilized both short- and long term methods, involving

- chemical,
- mechanical and
- biological control measures.
- The primary and most successful control measure is chemical spraying.

Normal treatment schedule: April 1 – December 31. This year limited to period between July 2, 2001 through October 15, 2001, due to endangered smelt and split tail.

#### Problems Related to Ecosystem

DeltaKeeper (parent co: BayKeeper) sent DBW a notice of intent to sue unless we got permits. We stopped treatment and applied for permits. the WH program ceased operations in November 1999. They filed suit on February 15, 2000.

The lawsuit was dismissed in federal court on January 22, 2001 . Appeal was dismissed on May 21, 2001.

Permits were obtained:

- SWRCB – March 7, 2001
- USFWS - June 6, 2001
- NMFS – June 8, 2001